

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. An interactive computer method for monitoring a project, the
2 method comprising the steps of:
3 defining authorized individuals who have access to an interactive
4 computer system providing data interchange;
5 opening a collaboration center for authorized individuals;
6 allowing access to the collaboration center by the authorized
7 individual;
8 defining one of a collaboration purpose and deadline; and
9 accepting input information from authorized individuals relating to the
10 collaboration.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
2 allowing all authorized individuals to perform one of, review, submit,
3 author, and change data and to interact with other authorized individuals in the
4 collaboration center.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 notifying all authorized individuals of a change in at least one of the
3 collaboration center purpose, deadline, plan, and input.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 accepting votes of authorized individuals for an element of the
3 collaboration.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 maintaining and displaying the status of each collaboration.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
2 providing the collaboration center with the capability of receiving

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3 documents attached to user responses.

1 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 establishing a plan to meet the purpose.

1 8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
2 establishing a plurality of information modules to control at least one of
3 project planning, establishing and tracking project tasks, allowing access to
4 documents and information in any module, providing issue resolution, reviewing
5 project progress, tracking project finances, scheduling and attending meetings,
6 requesting information, reporting project data, controlling changes to prospect
7 documents and archiving project data.

1 9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of:
2 using electronic mail interaction between authorized individuals and
3 the information modules.

1 10. The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of:
2 linking each of the information modules for data interchange between
3 each module.

1 11. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of allowing access to
2 documents and information in any module comprises the step of:
3 assigning status states to each of the documents.

1 12. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of requesting
2 information further comprises the step of:
3 specifying the name of request recipients for defined organization
4 categories.

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1 13. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of requesting
2 information further comprises the steps of:
3 issuing a request for information;
4 designating a designated recipient for the request for information;
5 providing the designated recipient with the capability of one of replying
6 directly to the request for information, delegating the request for information to a
7 designated delegate with the capability for the designated delegate to respond directly
8 to the request for information; and
9 providing the designated recipient with the capability of delegating the
10 request for information to a designated delegate and solely receiving a reply from the
11 designated delegate.

1 14. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of reviewing project
2 progress further comprises the steps of:
3 issuing a request for project data review;
4 designating a plurality of designated recipients for the review request;
5 and
6 providing for a reply from the plurality of designated review requests
7 by one of in parallel from each designated review recipient and in series from all of
8 the designated recipients.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a personal preference
3 for receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project
4 documents, project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests,
5 finance changes, request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and
6 project plans.

1 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of selecting how to
2 receive notifications comprises the step of:
3 electing one of receiving notifications by electronic mail, with or

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4 without attached documents, and the form of the electronic mail.

1 17. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of:
2 sending the notifications to each authorized individual by electronic
3 mail.

1 18. An interactive computer method for monitoring a project, the
2 method comprising the steps of:
3 establishing a plurality of information modules to control at least one of
4 project planning, establishing and tracking project tasks, allowing access to
5 documents and information in any module, providing issue resolution, reviewing
6 project progress, tracking project finances, scheduling and attending meetings,
7 requesting information, reporting project data, controlling changes to prospect
8 documents, establishing a collaboration center for planning and resolving a
9 collaboration purposes, and archiving project data.

1 19. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 using electronic mail interaction between authorized individuals and
3 the information modules.

1 20. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a personal preference
3 for receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project
4 documents, project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests,
5 finance changes, request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and
6 project plans.

1 21. The method of claim 20 wherein the step of selecting how to
2 receive notifications comprises the step of:
3 electing one of receiving notifications by electronic mail, with or
4 without attached documents, and the form of the electronic mail.

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1 22. The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of:
2 sending the notifications to each authorized individual by electronic
3 mail.

1 23. The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:
2 allowing all authorized individuals to perform one of review, submit,
3 author, and change data and to interact with other authorized individuals in the
4 collaboration center.

1 24. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 notifying all authorized individuals of a change in at least one of the
3 collaboration center purpose, deadline, plan, and input.

1 25. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 accepting votes of authorized individuals to one of the purposes and the
3 plan of the collaboration.

1 26. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 maintaining and displaying the status of each collaboration.

1 27. The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:
2 providing the collaboration center with the capability of receiving
3 documents attached to user responses.

1 28. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 linking each of the information modules for data interchange between
3 each module.

1 29. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 allowing access to documents and information in any module; and

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3 assigning status states to each of the documents.

1 30. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of requesting
2 information further comprises the step of:
3 specifying the name of request recipients for defined organization
4 categories.

1 31. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of requesting
2 information further comprises the steps of:
3 issuing a request for information;
4 designating a designated recipient for the request for information;
5 providing the designated recipient with the capability of one of replying
6 directly to the request for information, delegating the request for information to a
7 designated delegate with the capability for the designated delegate to respond directly
8 to the request for information; and
9 providing the designated recipient with the capability of delegating the
10 request for information to a designated delegate and solely receiving a reply from the
11 designated delegate.

1 32. The claim 18 wherein the step of reviewing project progress
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 issuing a request for project data review;
4 designating a plurality of designated recipients for the review request;
5 and
6 providing for a reply from the plurality of designated review requests
7 by one of in parallel from each designated review recipient and in series from all of
8 the designated recipients.

1 33. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a

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personal preference for receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project documents, project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests, finance changes, request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and project plans.

34. The method of claim 19 further comprising the steps of:
providing an electronic mail response capability for at least certain of the requests and notifications issued in any of the information modules allowing an authorized user to respond to the request and notification by direct electronic mail reply; and
the information modules documenting the reply and any documents attached to the reply in the appropriate information module.

35. The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of:
allowing a user to attach documents to a request and notification.

36. An interactive computer apparatus for monitoring the progress of a project, the apparatus comprising:
a computer network with operating software allowing access to project data by authorized individuals using the computer network;
means for defining authorized individuals who are authorized to access the project on the network;
means for creating a collaboration center;
means for allowing access to the collaboration center by authorized individuals;
means for defining one of a collaboration purpose and deadline;
means for establishing a plan to meet the collaboration purpose; and
means for accepting inputs from authorized users to one of the collaboration purpose, plan and deadline, over the computer network.

37. The computer apparatus of claim 36 further comprising:

the operating software is contained in a central processor accessible by each of a plurality of individual nodes.

38. The computer apparatus of claim 37 wherein each of the nodes communicates with the central processor via a computer network.

39. The computer apparatus of claim 37 wherein the computer network uses Internet communication protocol for data communication between the nodes and the central processor.

40. An interactive computer apparatus for monitoring the progress of a project, the apparatus comprising:

- a computer network with operating software allowing access to project data by authorized individuals using the computer network;
- means for defining authorized individuals who are authorized to access the project on the network;
- means for planning the project;
- means for establishing and tracking project tasks;
- means for allowing access to project documents and information;
- means for providing issue resolutions;
- means for reviewing project progress;
- means for tracking project finances;
- means for scheduling and attending meetings between authorized individuals;
- means for requesting information;
- means for reporting project data;
- means for controlling changes to project documents and information;
- and
- means for archiving project data.

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